

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00

EB-07 FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 EPG-02 SP-02 STR-04

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USEEC, PARIS ALSO FOR USOECD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EEC, FR

SUBJ: CGT'S DIMINISHED PRESENCE IN BRUSSELS

1. THE FRENCH GENERAL CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (CGT) IS WITHDRAWING ITS "EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT" FROM BRUSSELS, ACCORDING TO LABOR AND COMMISSION SOURCES HERE. THE CGT SIGN STILL HANGS PROMINENTLY ON THE OUTER DOOR OF THE SECRETARIAT'S OFFICE, LOCATED ABOUT A MILE EAST OF THE EC COMMISSION'S HEADQUARTERS, BUT THE DOOR IS LOCKED, AND NOBODY ANSWERS THE BELL OR THE TELEPHONE THESE DAYS.
2. GEORGES CROESE, CGT CONFEDERAL BOARD MEMBER WHO HAS HEADED THE SECRETARIAT, HAS PERSONALLY ADVISED SEVERAL COMMISSION OFFICIALS OF THE NEWS, ADDING THAT FORMAL NOTIFICATION FROM THE CGT WOULD FOLLOW.
3. CROESE REPORTEDLY MOVED HIS FAMILY BACK TO PARIS

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AROUND JULY 1. HE REMAINS ONE OF THE 22 FRENCH MEMBERS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY'S ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE (ESC), BUT NOW, LIKE HIS COLLEAGUES, HE WILL COMMUTE HERE FOR COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

4. ASKED WHY THE CGT IS SHUTTING DOWN ITS BRUSSELS BASE, ONE COMMISSION STAFFER SAID, "THAT'S WHAT WE WOULD LIKE

TO KNOW." ROGER LOUET, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE ESC SECRETARIAT AND A FORMER FRENCH FO LEADER, OFFERS THIS EXPLANATION, WHICH HE GOT DIRECTLY FROM CROESE: THE

CLOSURE IS PART OF THE CGT EFFORT TO MAKE ITSELF MORE ACCEPTABLE TO THE ETUC.

5. OVER THE YEARS, STARTING A FEW MONTHS AFTER THE ETUC WAS FOUNDED IN 1973, THE CGT HAS MADE PERIODIC OVERTURES TO JOIN THE ETUC, BUT HAS BEEN REBUFFED FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS, A MINOR BUT SYMBOLIC ONE BEING THE EXISTENCE OF ITS "EUROPEAN SECRETARIAT" AS A COMPETING LABOR LOBBY IN BRUSSELS.

6. THE BRUSSELS SECRETARIAT WAS ESTABLISHED ABOUT TEN YEARS AGO AS AN ARM OF A JOINT "PERMANENT COMMITTEE" BETWEEN THE CGT AND ANOTHER COMMUNIST-LED UNION, THE ITALIAN CGIL. THE COMMITTEE DIED AFTER THE CGIL ENTERED THE ETUC IN JULY 1974, BUT THE CGT MAINTAINED THE SECRETARIAT AS A SOLO OPERATION.

7. APART FROM ITS PARTICIPATION IN THE ESC (TO WHICH CROESE WAS NOMINATED BY THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT), THE CGT IN THE PAST YEAR OR SO HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY ISOLATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IN EC AFFAIRS. PARTLY BECAUSE OF PRESSURE FROM THE GERMAN DGB, THE EC COMMISSION HAS OF LATE FOLLOWED A POLICY OF DEALING ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY WITH THE ETUC ON LABOR AFFAIRS. AS MEMBERSHIPS ON THE VARIOUS EC CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES HAVE COME UP FOR RENEWAL, THE COMMISSION LIMITED APPOINTMENTS TO PERSONS REPRESENTING EUROPEAN-WIDE ORGANIZATIONS, MUCH TO THE CGT'S IRRITATION.

8. HOWEVER, THE CGT--LIKE THE FRENCH CFTC AND CGC-- PARTICIPATED IN ITS OWN NAME IN THE COMMUNITY'S TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE IN LUXEMBOURG ON JUNE 28, 1977, JUST AS IT HAD DONE IN THE JUNE 1976 TRIPARTITE CONFERENCE. BUT CONTRARY TO ITS POSTURE A YEAR EARLIER, THE CGT TOOK A MODERATE POSITION AT LUXEMBOURG LAST MONTH. INSTEAD OF STAKING OUT AN INDEPENDENT LINE AS OCCURRED IN 1976, THE CGT REPRESENTATIVE, JEAN-LOUIS MOYNOT, POINTEDLY PRAISED THE ECONOMIC POLICY STATEMENTS ADOPTED BY THE ETUC.

9. COMMENT: THE CLOSURE OF THE CGT OFFICE HERE HAS NOT YET BEEN OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED BY THE CGT ITSELF. IN ANY CASE, SUCH A MOVE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE LINKED TO ANY NEW EFFORT TO OBTAIN CGT AFFILIATION TO THE ETUC. THE

SUBJECT IS NOT RPT NOT ON THE AGENDA OF THE NEXT ETUC
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, TO BE HELD IN BRUSSELS SEPTEMBER 29-
30. ACCORDING TO SIGNALS THAT THE ETUC SECRETARIAT IS
GETTING FROM PARIS, THE CGT ITSELF PREFERS THAT THE ISSUE
REMAIN DORMANT UNTIL AFTER THE FRENCH ELECTIONS IN SPRING
NEXT YEAR.HINTON

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